

REMARKS

Applicants request reconsideration and allowance of the subject application in view of the foregoing amendments and the following remarks.

Claims 1-7 and 11-18 are pending in the application, with Claims 1 and 11 being independent.

The specification has been amended to correct minor mistakes and to improve its form. No new matter has been added.

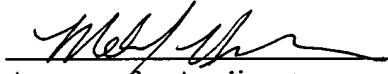
Claims 1-7 and 11-18 have been deemed allowable.

Claims 8 and 9 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by JP 10206445 A (“Shii”). Claims 8 and 10 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being obvious over U.S. Patent No. 4,031,466 (“Krause”) in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,308,140 (“Dowling”). Without conceding the propriety of these rejections, Applicants have herein cancelled Claims 8-10 without prejudice to or disclaimer of the subject matter contained therein. Applicants submit that the rejections are now moot.

Applicants submit that the application is in condition for allowance. Favorable consideration and passage to issue of the application at the Examiner’s earliest convenience are requested.

Applicants' undersigned attorney may be reached in Washington, D.C. by telephone at (202) 530-1010. All correspondence should continue to be directed to the below-listed address.

Respectfully submitted,



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